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and relative size, from the spider whose eye is provided with lenses and a vitreous humor. Consonantly with the theory, each of these probably opposing views is equally true. This ugly dilemma is foreseen by our author, for he grants that "the knowledge of the insect, its knowledge of the action of the outer world, is altogether a different one from that of man," but he avoids the ultimate result of this reasoning.

To sum up the views of this school: matter is eternal, force is eternal, but each is impossible without the other; what bears any relation to our senses we either know or can know; what does not, it is absurd to discuss; the highest thought is but the physical elaboration of sensations, or, to use the expression of Carl Vogt, "thought is a secretion of the brain as urine is of the kidneys. Without phosphorus there is no thought." "And so," concludes Moleschott, "only when thought is based on fact, only when the reason is granted no sphere of action but the historical which arises from observation, when the perception is at the same time thought, and the understanding sees with consciousness,

does the contradiction between Philosophy and Science disappear."

This, then, is the last word of materialism, this the solution it now offers us of the great problem of Life. We enter no further into its views, for all collateral questions concerning the origin of the ideas of the true, the good and the beautiful, the vital force, and the spiritual life, depend directly on the question we have above mentioned. Let the reader turn back precisely a century to the *Système de la Nature*, so long a boasted bulwark of the rationalistic school, and judge for himself what advance, if any, materialism has made in fortifying this, the most vital point of her structure. Let him ask himself anew whether the criticism of Hume on the law of cause and effect can in any way be met except after the example of Kant, by the assumption of the absolute idea, and we have little doubt what conclusion he will arrive at in reference to that system which, while it boasts to offer the only method of discovering truth, starts with the flat denial of all truth other than relative.

LETTERS ON FAUST.

By H. C. BROCKMEYER.

I.

DEAR H.—Yours of a recent date, requesting an epistolary criticism of "Goethe's Faust," has come to hand, and I hasten to assure you of a compliance of some sort. I say a compliance of some sort, for I cannot promise you a criticism. This, it seems to me, would be both too little and too much; too little if understood in the ordinary sense, as meaning a mere statement of the *relation* existing between the work and myself; too much if interpreted as pledging an expression of a work of the creative imagination, as a totality, in the terms of the understanding, and submitting the result to the canons of art.

The former procedure, usually called criticism, reduced to its simplest forms, amounts to this: that I, the critic, report

to you, that I was amused or bored, flattered or satirized, elevated or degraded, humanized or brutalized, enlightened or mystified, pleased or displeased, by the work under consideration; and—since it depends quite as much upon my own humor, native ability, and culture acquired, which set of adjectives I may be able to report, as it does upon the work—I cannot perceive what earthly profit such a labor could be to you. For that which is clear to you may be dark to me; hence, if I report that a given work is a "perfect riddle to me," you will only smile at my simplicity. Again, that which amuses me may bore you, for I notice that even at the theatre, some will yawn with *ennui* while others thrill with delight, and applaud the play. Now, if each of these should tell you how *he* liked the performance, the one

would say "excellent," and the other "miserable," and you be none the wiser. To expect, therefore, that I intend to enter upon a labor of this kind, is to expect too little.

Besides, such an undertaking seems to me not without its peculiar danger; for it may happen that the work measures or criticises the critic, instead of the latter the former. If, for example, I should tell you that the integral and differential calculus is all fog to me—mystifies me completely—you would conclude my knowledge of mathematics to be rather imperfect, and thus use my own report of that work as a sounding-lead to ascertain the depth of my attainment. Nay, you might even go further, and regard the work as a kind of Doomsday Book, on the title page of which I had "written myself down an ass.*" Now, as I am not ambitious of a memorial of this kind, especially when there is no probability that the pages in contemplation—Goethe's Faust—will perish any sooner than the veritable Doomsday Book itself, I request you, as a special favor, not to understand of me that I propose engaging in any undertaking of this sort.*

Nor are you to expect an inquiry into the quantity or quality of the author's food, drink or raiment. For the present infantile state of analytic science refuses all aid in tracing such *primary* elements, so to speak, in the composition of the poem before us; and hence such an investigation would lead, at best, to very secondary and remote conclusions. Nor shall we be permitted to explore the likes and dislikes of the poet, in that fine volume of

* In this connection, permit me, dear friend, to mention a discovery which I made concerning my son Isaac, now three years old. Just imagine my surprise when I found that every book in my possession—Webster's Spelling-book not excepted—is a perfect riddle to him, and mystifies him as completely as ever the works of Goethe, Hegel, Emerson, or any other thinking man, do or did the learned critics. But my parental pride, so much elated by the discovery of this remarkable precocity in my son—a precocity which, at the age of three years, (!) shows him possessed of all the incapacity of such "learned men"—was shocked, nay, mortified, by the utter want of appreciation which the little fellow showed of this, his exalted condition!

scandal, for the kindred reason that neither crucible, reagent nor retort are at hand which can be of the remotest service.

By the by, has it never occurred to you, when perusing works of the kind last referred to, what a glowing picture the pious Dean of St. Patrick's, the *saintly Swift*, has bequeathed to us of their producers, when he places the great authors, the historical Gullivers of our race, in all their majesty of form, astride the public thoroughfare of a Lilliputian age, and marches the inhabitants, in solid battalions, through between their legs? you recollect what he says?

Nor yet are you to expect a treat of that most delightful of all compounds, the table talk and conversation—or, to use a homely phrase, the *literary dishwater* retailed by the author's scullion. To expect such, or the like, would be to expect too little.

On the other hand, to expect that I shall send you an expression, in the terms of the understanding, of a work of the creative imagination, as a totality, and submit the result to the canons of art, is to expect too much. For while I am ready, and while I intend to comply with the first part of this proposition, I am unable to fulfil the requirement of the latter part—that is, I am not able to submit the result to the canons of art. The reason for this inability it is not necessary to develop in this connection any further than merely to mention that I find it extremely inconvenient to lay my hand upon the aforementioned canons just at this time.

I must, therefore, content myself with the endeavor to summon before you the *Idea* which creates the poem—each act, scene and verse—so that we may see the part in its relation to the whole, and the whole in its concrete, organic articulation. If we succeed in this, then we may say that we *comprehend* the work—a condition precedent alike to the beneficial enjoyment and the rational judgment of the same.

II.

In my first letter, dear friend, I endeavored to guard you against misapprehension

as to what you might expect from me. Its substance, if memory serves me, was that I did not intend to write on Anthropology or Psychology, nor yet on street, parlor or court gossip, but simply about a work of art.

I deemed these remarks pertinent in view of the customs of the time, lest that, in my not conforming to them, you should judge me harshly without profit to yourself. With the same desire of keeping up a fair understanding with you, I must call your attention to some terms and distinctions which we shall have occasion to use, and which, unless explained, might prove shadows instead of lights along the path of our intercourse.

I confess to you that I share the (I might say) abhorrence so generally entertained by the reading public, of the use of any general terms whatsoever, and would avoid them altogether if I could only see how. But in reading the poem that we are to consider, I come upon such passages as these:

(*Choir of invisible Spirits.*)

"Woe! Woe!

Thou hast destroyed it,

The beautiful world!

It reels, it crumbles,

Crushed by a demigod's mighty hand!"

and I cannot see how we are to understand these spirits, or the poet who gave them voice, unless we attack this very general expression "The beautiful world," here said to have been destroyed by Faust.

I am, however, somewhat reconciled to this by the example of my neighbor—a non-speculative, practical farmer—now busily engaged in harvesting his wheat. For I noticed that he first directed his attention, after cutting the grain, to collecting and tying it together in bundles; and I could not help but perceive how much this facilitated his labor, and how difficult it would have been for him to collect his wheat, grain by grain, like the sparrow of the field. Though wheat it were, and not chaff, still such a mode of handling would reduce it even below the value of chaff.

Just think of handling the wheat crop of these United States, the two hundred and twenty-five millions of bushels a year,

in this manner! It is absolutely not to be thought of, and we must have recourse to agglomeration, if not to generalization. But the one gives us general *masses*, and the other general *terms*. The only thing that we can do, therefore, is, in imitation of our good neighbor of the wheat field, to handle bundles, bushels, and bags, or—what is still better, if it can be done by some daring system of intellectual elevators—whole ship loads of grain at a time, due care being taken that we tie wheat to wheat, oats to oats, barley to barley, and not promiscuously.

Now, with this example well before our minds, and the necessity mentioned, which compels us to handle—not merely the wheat crop of the United States for one year, but—whatever has been raised by the intelligence of man from the beginning of our race to the time of Goethe the poet, together with the ground on which it was raised, and the sky above—for no less than this seems to be contained in the expression "The beautiful world"—I call your attention first to the expression "form and matter," which, when applied to works of intelligence, we must take the liberty of changing into the expression "form and content;" for since there is nothing in works of this kind that manifests gravity, it can be of no use to say so, but may be of some injury.

The next is the expression "works of art," which sounds rather suspicious in some of its applications—sounds as if it was intended to conceal rather than reveal the worker. Now I take it that the "works of art" are the works of the intelligence, and I shall have to classify them accordingly. Another point with reference to this might as well be noticed, and that is that the old expressions "works of art" and "works of nature" do not contain, as they were intended to, all the works that present themselves to our observation—the works of science, for example. Besides, we have government, society, and religion, all of which are undoubtedly distinct from the "works of art" no less than from the "works of nature," and to tie them up in the same bundle with either of them, seems to me to be

like tying wheat with oats, and therefore to be avoided, as in the example before our minds. This seems to be done in the expression "works of self-conscious intelligence," and "works of nature."

But if we reflect upon the phrases "works of self-conscious intelligence" and "works of nature," it becomes obvious that there must be some inaccuracy contained in them; for how can two distinct

subjects have the same predicate? It would, therefore, perhaps be better to say "the works of self-conscious intelligence" and the "*products* of nature."

Without further rasping and filing of old phrases, I call your attention, in the next place, to the most general term which we shall have occasion to use—"the world."

Under this we comprehend:

- I. The natural world—Gravity;
- II. The spiritual world—Self-determination.

I. Under the natural world we comprehend the terrestrial globe, and that part of the universe which is involved in its processes; these are:

- (a) (1.) Mechanic=Gravity, } Meteorologic=Electricity.
- (2.) Chemic=Affinity, }
- (b) (1.) Organic=Galvanism, } Vital=Sensation.
- (2.) Vegetative=Assimilation, }

II. Under "The Spiritual World," the world of conscious intelligence, we comprehend:

- (a) The real world=implement, mediation.
- (b) The actual world=self-determination.

(a) The real world contains whatever derives the end of its existence only, from self-conscious intelligence.

- (1.) The family=Affection.
- (2.) Society=Ethics, } Mediation.
- (3.) State=Rights, }

(b) The actual world contains whatever derives the end and the *means* of its existence from self-conscious intelligence.

- (1.) Art=Manifestation, } Self-determination.
- (2.) Religion=Revelation, }
- (3.) Philosophy=Definition, }

From this it appears that we have divided the world into three large slices—the Natural, the Real, and the Actual—with gravity for one and self-determination for the other extreme, and mediation between them.

III.

In my last, I gave you some general terms, and the sense in which I intend to use them. I also gave you a reason why I should use them, together with an illustration. But I gave you no reason why I used these and no others—or I did not advance anything to show that there are *objects* to which they *necessarily* apply. I only take it for granted that there are some objects presented to your observation and mine, that gravitate or

weigh something, and others that do not. To each I have applied as nearly as I could the ordinary terms. Now this procedure, although very unphilosophical, I can justify only by reminding you of the object of these letters.

If we now listen again to the chant of the invisible choir,

"Thou hast destroyed it,
The beautiful world,"

it will be obvious that this can refer only to the world of mediation and self-determination, to the world of spirit, of self-conscious intelligence, for the world of gravitation is not so easily affected. But how is this—how is it that the world of self-conscious intelligence is so easily affected, is so dependent upon the individ-

ual man? This can be seen only by examining its genesis.

In the genesis of Spirit we have three stages — manifestation, realization, and actualization. The first of these, upon which the other two are dependent and sequent, falls in the individual man. For, in him it is that Reason manifests itself before it can realize, or embody itself in this or that political, social, or moral institution. And it is not merely necessary that it should so manifest itself in the individual; it must also realize itself in these institutions before it can actualize itself in Art, Religion, and Philosophy. For in this actualization it is absolutely dependent upon the former two stages of its genesis for a content. From this it appears that Art *shows* what Religion *teaches*, and what Philosophy *comprehends*; or that Art, Religion and Philosophy have the same content. Nor is it difficult to perceive why this world of spirit or self-conscious intelligence is so dependent upon the individual man.

Again, in the sphere of manifestation and reality, this content, the self-conscious intelligence, is the *self-consciousness* of an individual, a nation, or an age. And art, in the sphere of actuality, is this or that work of art, this poem, that painting, or yonder piece of sculpture, with the self-consciousness of this or that individual, nation, or age, for its content. Moreover, the particularity (the individual, nation, or age) of the content constitutes the individuality of the work of Art. And not only this, but this particularity of the self-consciousness furnishes the very contradiction itself with the development and solution of which the work of art is occupied. For the self-consciousness which constitutes the content, being the *self-consciousness* of an individual, a nation, or an age, instead of being self-conscious intelligence in its pure universality, contains in that very particularity the contradiction which, in the sphere of manifestation and reality, constitutes the collision, conflict, and solution.*

* From this a variety of facts in the character and history of the different works of art become apparent. The degree of the effect

Now, if we look back upon the facts stated, we have the manifestation, the realization, and the actualization of self-conscious intelligence as the three spheres or stages in the process which evolves and involves the entire activity of man, both practical and theoretical. It is also obvious that the realization of self-conscious intelligence in the family, society, and the state, and its actualization in Art, Religion, and Philosophy, depend in their genesis upon its manifestation in the individual. Hence a denial of the possibility of this manifestation is a denial of the possibility of the realization and actualization also.

Now if this denial assume the form of a conviction in the consciousness of an individual, a nation, or an age, then there results a contradiction which involves in the sweep of its universality the entire spiritual world of man. For it is the self-consciousness of that individual, nation, or age, in direct conflict with itself, not with this or that particularity of itself, but with its entire content, in the sphere of manifestation, with the receptivity for, the production of, and the aspiration after, the Beautiful, the Good, and the True, within the individual himself; in the sphere of realization with the Family, with Society, and with the State; and finally, in the sphere of actuality with Art, Religion, and Philosophy.

Now this contradiction is precisely what is presented in the proposition, "Man cannot know truth." This you will remember was, in the history of modern thought, the result of Kant's philosophy. And Kant's philosophy was the philosophy of Germany at the time of the conception of Goethe's Faust. And Goethe was the truest poet of Germany, and thus he sings:

"So then I have studied philosophy,
Jurisprudence and medicine,
And what is worse, Theology,
Thoroughly, but, alas! in vain,
And here I stand with study hoar,
A fool, and know what I knew before;
Am called Magister, nay, LL.D.,

produced, for example, is owing to the degree of validity attached to the two sides of the contradiction. If the duties which the individual

And for ten years, am busily
Engaged, leading through fen and close,
My trusting pupils by the nose;
Yet see that nothing can be known.
This burns my heart, this, this alone !"

Here, you will perceive in the first sentence of the poem, as was meet, the fundamental contradiction, the theme, or the "argument," as it is so admirably termed by critics, is stated in its naked abstractness, just as Achilles' wrath is the first sentence of the *Iliad*.

This theme, then, is nothing more nor less than the self-consciousness in contradiction with itself, in conflict with its own content. Hence, if the poem is to portray this theme, this content, in its totality, it must represent it in three spheres: first, Manifestation—Faust in conflict with himself; second, Realization—Faust in conflict with the Family, Society, and the State; thirdly, Actualization—Faust in conflict with Art, Religion, and Philosophy.

Now, my friend, please to examine the poem once more, reflect closely upon what has been said, and then tell how much of the poem can you spare, or how much is

owed to the family and the state come into conflict, as in the *Antigone* of Sophocles, and the consciousness of the age has not subordinated the ideas upon which they are based, but accords to each an equal degree of validity, we have a content replete with the noblest effects. For this is not a conflict between the abstract good and bad, the positive and the negative, but a conflict within the good itself. So likewise the universality of the effect is apparent from the content. If this is the self-consciousness of a nation, the work of art will be national. To illustrate this, and, at the same time, to trace the development of the particularity spoken of into a collision, we may refer to that great national work of art—the *Iliad* of Homer. The particularity which distinguishes the national self-consciousness of the Greeks is the preëminent validity attached by it to one of the before-mentioned modes of the actualization of self-conscious intelligence—the sensuous. Hence its worship of the Beautiful. This preëminence and the consequent subordination of the moral and the rational modes to it, is the root of the contradiction, and hence the basis of the collision which forms the content of the poem. Its motive modernized would read about as follows: "The son of one of our Senators goes to England; is received and hospitably entertained at the house of a lord. During his stay he falls in love and subsequently elopes with the young wife of his entertainer. For this outrage, perpetrated by the young hopeful, the entire fighting material of the island get

there in the poem as printed, which does not flow from or develop this theme?

IV.

In my last, dear friend, I called your attention to the theme, to the content of the poem in a general way, stating it in the very words of the poet himself. To trace the development of this theme from the abstract generality into concrete detail is the task before us.

According to the analysis, we have to consider, first of all, the sphere of *Manifestation*.

In this we observe the three-fold relation which the individual sustains to self-conscious intelligence, viz: Receptivity for, and production of, and aspiration for, the True, the Good, and the Beautiful. Now if it is true that man cannot know truth, then it follows that he can neither receive nor produce the True. For how shall he know that whatever he may receive and produce is true, since it is specially denied that he can know it. This conclusion as conviction, however, does not affect immediately the third relation—the aspira-

themselves into their ships, not so much to avenge the injured husband as to capture the runaway wife."

But—now mark—adverse winds ensue, powers not human are in arms against them, and before these can be propitiated, a princess of the blood royal, pure and undefiled, must be sacrificed!—is sacrificed, and for what? That all Greece may proclaim to the world that pure womanhood, pure manhood, family, society, and the state, are nothing, must be sacrificed on the altar of the Beautiful. For in the sacrifice of Iphigenia, all that could perish in Helen, and more too—for Iphigenia was pure and Helen was not—was offered up by the Greeks, woman for woman, and nothing remained but the Beautiful, for which she henceforth became the expression. For in this alone did Helen excel Iphigenia, and all women.

But how is this? Have not the filial, the parental, the social, the civil relations, sanctity and validity? Not as against the realization of the Beautiful, says the Greek. Nor yet the state? No; "I do not go at the command of Agamemnon, but because I pledged fealty to Beauty." "But then," Sir Achilles, "if the Beautiful should present itself under some individual form—say that of Briseis—you would for the sake of its possession disobey the will of the state?" "Of course." And the poet has to sing, "Achilles' wrath!" and not "the recovery of the runaway wife," the grand historical action.

tion—nor quench its gnawing. And this is the first form of conflict in the individual. Let us now open the book and place it before us.

The historic origin of our theme places us in a German University, in the professor's private studio.

It is well here to remember that it is a German University, and that the occupant of the room is a *German* professor. Also that it is the received opinion that the Germans are a *theoretical* people; by which we understand that they act from conviction, and not from instinct. Moreover, that their conviction is not a mere holiday affair, to be rehearsed, say on Sunday, and left in charge of a minister, paid for the purpose, during the balance of the week, but an actual, vital fountain of action. Hence, the conviction of such a character being given, the acts follow in logical sequence.

With this remembered, let us now listen to the self-communion of the occupant of the room.

In bitter earnest the man has honestly examined, and sought to possess himself of the intellectual patrimony of the race. In poverty, in solitude, in isolation, he has labored hopefully, earnestly; and now he casts up his account and finds—what? "That nothing can be known." His hair is gray with more than futile endeavor, and for ten years his special calling has been to guide the students to waste their lives, as he has done his own, in seeking to accomplish the impossible—to know. This is the worm that gnaws his heart! As compensation, he is free from superstition—fears neither hell nor devil. But this sweeps with it all fond delusions, all conceit that he is able to know, and to teach something for the elevation of mankind. Nor yet does he possess honor or wealth—a dog would not lead a life like this.

Here you will perceive how the first two relations are negated by the conviction that man cannot know truth, and how, on the wings of aspiration, he sallies forth into the realm of magic, of mysticism, of subjectivity. For if reason, with its mediation, is impotent to create an object for

this aspiration, let us see what emotion and imagination, *without* mediation, can do for subjective satisfaction.

And here all is glory, all is freedom! The imagination seizes the totality of the universe, and revels in ecstatic visions. What a spectacle! But, alas! a spectacle only! How am I to know, to comprehend the fountain of life, the centre of which articulates this totality?

See here another generalization: the practical world as a whole! Ah, that is my sphere; here I have a firm footing; here I am master; here I command spirits! Approach, and obey your master!

"Spirit. Who calls?"

Faust. Terrific face!

Sp. Art thou he that called?

Thou trembling worm!

Faust. Yes; I'm he; am Faust, thy peer.

Sp. Peer of the Spirit thou comprehendest—not of me!

Faust. What! not of thee! Of whom, then? I, the image of Deity itself, and not even thy peer?"

No, indeed, Mr. Faust, thou dost not include within thyself the totality of the practical world, but only that part thereof which thou dost comprehend—only thy *vocation*, and hark! "It knocks!"

Oh, death! I see, 't is my vocation; indeed, "It is my *famulus*!"

And this, too, is merely a delusion; this great mystery of the practical world shrinks to this dimension—a bread-professorship.

It would seem so; for no theory of the practical world is possible without the ability to know truth. As individual, you may imitate the individual, as the brute his kind, and thus transmit a craft; but you cannot seize the practical world in transparent forms and present it as a harmonious totality to your fellow-man, for that would require that these transparent intellectual forms should possess objective validity—and this they have not, according to your conviction. And so it cannot be helped.

But see what a despicable thing it is to be a bread-professor!

And is this the mode of existence, this the reality, the only reality to answer the aspiration of our soul—the aspiration

which sought to seize the universe, to kindle its inmost recesses with the light of intelligence, and thus illumine the path of life? Alas; Reason gave us error—Imagination, illusion—and the practical world, the *Will*, a bread-professorship! Nothing else? Yes; a bottle of laudanum!

Let us drink, and rest forever! But hold, is there nothing else, really? No emotional nature? Hark! what is that? Easter bells! The recollections of my youthful faith in a revelation! They must be examined. We cannot leave yet.

And see what a panorama, what a strange world lies embedded with those recollections. Let us see it in all its varied character and reality, on this Easter Sunday, for example.

V.

I have endeavored before to trace the derivation of the content of the first scene of the poem, together with its character, from the abstract theme of the work. In it we saw that the fundamental conviction of Faust leaves him naked—leaves him nothing but a bare avocation, a mere craft, and the precarious recollections of his youth (when he believed in revealed truths) to answer his aspirations. These recollections arouse his emotions, and rescue him from nothingness (suicide)—they fill his soul with a content.

To see this content with all its youthful charm, we have to retrace our childhood's steps before the gates of the city on this the Easter festival of the year—you and I being mindful, in the meantime, that the public festivals of the Church belong to the so-called external evidences of the truth of the Christian Religion.

Well, here we are in the suburbs of the city, and what do we see? First, a set of journeymen mechanics, eager for beer and brawls, interspersed with servant girls; students whose tastes run very much in the line of strong beer, biting tobacco, and the well-dressed servant girls aforesaid; citizens' daughters, perfectly outraged at the low taste of the students who run after the servant girls, "when they might have the very best of society;" citizens dissatisfied with the new mayor of

the city—"Taxes increase from day to day, and nothing is done for the welfare of the city." A beggar is not wanting. Other citizens, who delight to speak of war and rumors of war in distant countries, in order to enjoy their own peace at home with proper contrast; also an "elderly one," who thinks that she is quite able to furnish what the well-dressed citizens' daughters wish for—to the great scandal of the latter, who feel justly indignant at being addressed in public by such an old witch (although, "between ourselves, she did show us our sweethearts on St. Andrew's night"); soldiers, who sing of high-walled fortresses and proud women to be taken by storm; and, finally, farmers around the linden tree, dancing a most furious gallopade—a real Easter Sunday or Monday "before the gate"—of any city in Germany, even to this day.

And into this real world, done up in holiday attire, but not by the poet—into this paradise, this very heaven of the people, where great and small fairly yell with delight—Faust enters, assured that here he can maintain his rank as a man; "here I dare to be a man!" And, sure enough, listen to the welcome:

"Nay, Doctor, 'tis indeed too much
To be with us on such a day,
To join the throng, the common mass,
You, you, the great, the learned man!
Take, then, this beaker, too," &c.

And here goes—a general health to the Doctor, to the man who braved the pestilence for us, and who even now, does not think it beneath him to join us in our merry-making—hurrah for the Doctor; hip, hip, &c.

And is not this something, dear friend? Just think, with honest Wagner, when he exclaims, "What emotions must crowd thy breast, O great man, while listening to such honors?" and you will also say with him:

"Thrice blest the man who draws such profits rare,
From talents all his own!"

Why, see! the father shows you to his son; every one inquires—presses, rushes to see you! The fiddle itself is hushed, the dancers stop. Where you go, they fall into lines; caps and hats fly into the air!

But a little more, and they would fall upon their knees, as if the sacred Host passed that way!

And is not this great? Is not this the very goal of human ambition? To Wagner, dear friend, it is; for the very essence of an avocation is, and must be, "success in life." But how does it stand with the man whose every aspiration is the True, the Good, and the Beautiful? Will a hurrah from one hundred thousand throats, all in good yelling order, assist him? *No*.

To Wagner it is immaterial whether he *knows* what he *needs*, provided he sees the day when the man who has been worse to the people than the very pestilence itself, receives public honors; but to Faust, to the man really in earnest—who is not satisfied when he has squared life with life, and obtained zero for a result, or who does not merely *live to make a living*, but demands a rational end for life, and, in default of that rational end, spurns life itself—to such a man this whole scene possesses little significance indeed. It possesses, however, *some* significance, even for him! For if it is indeed true that man cannot know truth—that the high aspiration of his soul has no object—then this scene demonstrates, at least, that Faust possesses power over the practical world. If he cannot *know* the world, he can at least swallow a considerable portion of it, and this scene demonstrates that he can exercise a great deal of choice as to the parts to be selected; do you see this conviction?

Do you see this conviction? Do you see this dog? Consider it well; what is it, think you? Do you perceive how it encircles us nearer and nearer—becomes more and more certain, and, if I mistake not, a luminous emanation of gold, of honor, of power, follows in its wake. It seems to me as if it drew soft magic rings, as future fetters, round our feet! See, the circles become smaller and smaller—'t is almost a certainty—'t is already near; come, come home with us!

The temptation here spread before us by the poet, to consider the dog "*well*," is almost irresistible; but all we can say in

this place, dear friend, is that if you will look upon what is properly called an *avocation* in civil society, eliminate from it all higher ends and motives other than the simple one of making a living—no matter with what pomp and circumstance—no doubt you will readily recognize the *POODLE*. But we must hasten to the studio to watch further developments, for the conflict is not as yet decided. We are still to examine the possibility of a divine revelation to man, who cannot know truth.

And for this purpose our newly acquired conviction, that we possess power over the practical world—although not as yet in a perfectly clear form before us—comfortably lodged behind the stove, where it properly belongs, we take down the original text of the New Testament in order to realize its meaning, in our own loved mother tongue. It stands written: "In the beginning was the Word." Word? Word? Never! *Meaning* it ought to be! Meaning what? Meaning? No; it is *Power!* No; *Deed!* Word, meaning, power, deed—which is it? Alas, how am I to know, unless I can know truth? 'Tis even so, our youthful recollections dissolve in mist, into thin air—and nothing is left us but our newly acquired conviction, the restlessness of which during this examination has undoubtedly not escaped your attention, dear friend. ("Be quiet, there, behind the stove." "See here, poodle, one of us two has to leave this room!") What, then, is the whole content of this conviction, which, so long as there was the hope of a possibility of a worthy object for our aspiration, seemed so despicable? What is it that governs the practical world of finite motives, the power that adapts means to ends, regardless of a final, of an infinite end? Is it not the Understanding? and although Reason—in its search after the *final end*, with its perfect system of absolute means, of infinite motives and interests—begets subjective chimeras, is it not demonstrated that the understanding possesses objective validity? Nay, look upon this dog well; does it not swell into colossal proportions—is no dog at all, in fact, but the

very power that holds absolute sway over the finite and negative—the understanding itself—Mephistopheles in proper form?

And who calls this despicable? Is it not Reason, the power that begets chimeras, and it alone? And shall we reject the real, the actual—all in fact that possesses objective validity—because, forsooth, the power of subjective chimeras declares it negative, finite, perishable? Never. “No fear, dear sir, that I’ll do this. Precisely what I have promised is the very aim of all my endeavor. Conceited fool that I was! I prized myself too highly”—claimed kin with the infinite. “I belong only in thy sphere”—the finite. “The Great Spirit scorns me. Nature is a sealed book to me; the thread of thought is severed. Knowing disgusts me. In the depths of sensuality I’ll quench the burning passion.”

Here, then, my friend, we arrive at the final result of the conflict in the first sphere of our theme—in the sphere of manifestation—that of the individual. We started with the conviction *that man cannot know truth*. This destroyed our spiritual endeavors, and reduced our practical avocation to an absurdity. We sought refuge in the indefinite—the mysticism of the past—and were repelled by its subjectivity. We next examined the theoretical side of the practical world, and found this likewise an impossibility and suicide—a mere blank nothingness—as the only resource. But here we were startled by our emotional nature, which unites us with our fellow-man, and seems to promise some sort of a bridge over into

the infinite—certainly demands such a transition. Investigating this, therefore, with all candor, we found our fellow-men wonderfully occupied—occupied like the kitten pursuing its own tail! At the same time it became apparent that we might be quite a dog in this kitten dance, or that the activity of the understanding possessed objective validity. With this conviction fairly established, although still held in utter contempt, we examined the last resource: the possibility of a divine revelation of truth to men that cannot know truth. The result, as the mere statement of the proposition would indicate, is negative, and thus the last chance of obtaining validity for anything except the activity of the understanding vanishes utterly. But with this our contempt for the understanding likewise vanishes. For whatever our aspiration may say, it has no object to correspond to it, and is therefore merely subjective, a hallucination, a chimera, and the understanding is the highest attainable for us. Here, therefore, the subjective conflict ends, for we have attained to objectivity, and this is the highest, since there is nothing else that possesses validity for man. Nor is this by any means contemptible in itself, for it is the power over the finite world, and the net result is: That if you and I, my friend, have no reason, cannot know truth, we do have at least a stomach, a capacity for sensual enjoyment, and an understanding to administer to the same—to be its servant. This, at least, is demonstrated by the kitten dance of the whole world.

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY.

CHAPTER V.

NECESSITY, CHANCE, FREEDOM.

I.

All things are necessitated; each is necessitated by the totality of conditions; hence, whatever is must be so, and under the conditions cannot be otherwise.

Remark.—This is the most exhaustive statement of the position of the “under-

standing.” Nothing seems more clear than this to the thinker who has advanced beyond the sensuous grade of consciousness and the stages of Perception.

II.

But things change—something new begins and something old ceases; but, still, in each case, the first principle must apply, and the new thing—like the old—be